

Notes.

The name "Malayu."

The national name of the Malays is mentioned, if not for the first time in recorded history, at any rate with a distinct territorial denotation, as early as the 7th century of our era by I Tsing, a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, in two of his works, the *Ta-t'ang-si-yu-Ku-fa-Kao-sêng-ch'uan* or "Memoirs of Eminent Priests who visited India and Neighbouring Countries to search for the Law under the Great T'ang Dynasty." and the "Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago."

This latter work, the original title of which is *Nan-hai-chi-Kuei-nai-fa-ch'uan*, literally "The Record of the Sacred Law, sent home from the Southern Sea," has been translated, together with part of the former, into English, by J. Takakusu, a Japanese scholar, and was published in 1896 by the Oxford Clarendon Press. The author, who visited the Malay Archipelago in the winter of A. D. 671-2 and remained for some time in Sumatra, speaks of the *Mo-lo-yu* country as being one of the islands of the South Sea in which Buddhism then prevailed. He fixes its position by telling us that it lay to the west of *Shih-li-fo-shih* (Sri Bhoja or Bhoja), which place appears to be certainly identified with the *San-bo-tsai* of other Chinese chroniclers and the *Sarbaza* of the Arabian geographers of the 9th century. I Tsing tells us that Sri Bhoja had, in his time or shortly before his visit, annexed the *Mo-lo-yu* country.

Sri Bhoja was at this time a great centre of Buddhism, and I Tsing's object in visiting it was to study the sacred Canon and the Sanskrit language. After a stay of six months, he went on to the *Mo-lo-yu* country and then to India, but about A. D. 688 he returned to Sri Bhoja, and remained there about six years, so that he had ample opportunity for becoming acquainted with the circumstances of the country. From other sources* this

* See especially Groeneveldt's "Notes on the Malay Archipelago." etc., *Essays on Indo-China*, etc. 2nd series, vol. 1.

place Sri Bhoja, *San-bo-tsai*, *Sarbaza*, etc., as it is variously called, has been identified with almost absolute certainty as being situated on the Palembang river in South-eastern Sumatra; and the *Mo-lo-yu* country can therefore be confidently regarded as placed immediately to the west or north-west, that is to say about the middle of Sumatra. I Tsing, who stayed in the *Mo-lo-yu* country for two months on his way to India, says that it was fifteen days' sail from Bhoja, the capital of Sri Bhoja; and it must have been situated approximately under the Equator, for in the middle of the eighth month and in the middle of spring the sun cast no shadow there at noon. Moreover it was half-way on the route between Bhoja and *Ka-cha* (a place in or near Achin or Kedah, more probably the former, as it was south of the country of the Naked People, *i. e.*, the Nicobar and Andaman islands). From *Ka-cha* ships sailed in thirty days to *Nagapatana* (Negapatam), and I Tsing himself took ship there for *Tamralipti* (Tamluk), a port near the mouth of the Hooghly.

It seems therefore that the *Mo-lo-yu* country was not at this time a purely inland State, but had a coast line on the Straits more or less opposite to where Malacca now stands.

The language of the *Mo-lo-yu* country was that which served as a *lingua franca* in the Archipelago generally, and was known to I Tsing and other Chinese authors as the K'un-lun language. This term was derived, apparently, from the Chinese name of Pulau Condor, on the same principle on which slaves from these regions are often mentioned in Chinese chronicles as *K'un-lun* slaves, from whatever part of the Archipelago they might have actually been imported. The reason seems to have been that the Pulau Condor people were the first of the Southern islanders to come into contact with the Chinese, who afterwards loosely extended the term to the inhabitants of the Archipelago generally. This appears to be the meaning of the explanation I Tsing gives when, speaking of the Archipelago as a whole and after enumerating some of the principal islands, he goes on to say, "They were generally known by the general name of 'Country of K'un-lun' since (the people of) K'un-lun first visited Kochin and Kwangtung."

That the language was really Malay appears from the fact that the "*pin-lang* fruit" is mentioned by I Tsing as being used

in the Sri Bhoja country and other islands of the Archipelago for chewing with nutmegs, cloves and Barus camphor, for the purpose of rendering the mouth fragrant. *Pin-lang* is of course the Malay word *pinang*, areca nut.

In I Tsing's time, it seems therefore that the Malay country *par excellence* was in Central Sumatra, a fact agreeing very well with native Malay tradition on the subject, which derives the origin of many of the Malays of the Peninsula from the old Central Sumatran State of Menangkabau.

The etymological signification of the national name *Malayu* has been a subject of much dispute. I Tsing does not throw any additional light upon it; but he makes it quite clear that the word had in his time a local significance, and denoted the particular region from which a large part of the Malays of the modern *Tanah Malayu* love to trace their origin.

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The Putri Gunong Ledang.

(FAIRY PRINCESS OF MT. OPHIR.)

The following extract from an essay written by a Malacca Chinese boy may be of interest to readers of the Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. I give the boy's own words.

The aborigines of Malacca used to believe that Mt. Ophir was a sacred mountain. Mt. Ophir is also believed to be so by the Malays, as well as by most of the Strait-born Chinese. Since many years ago, neither Malays nor Chinese have ever reached the top of the mountain, where, as our ancestors say, there is plenty of gold strewn along the floor. Although some of the Europeans have been there, yet the natives have not believed it. It is said that there is a fairy who takes charge of the sacred mountain. In the morning, as the sun rises, the fairy is a beautiful girl playing near her well-built hut. At noon, as the sun is right over our head, the girl changes into a maiden; and in the evening, as the sun sets, the maiden becomes an old woman. The same thing happens every day.